

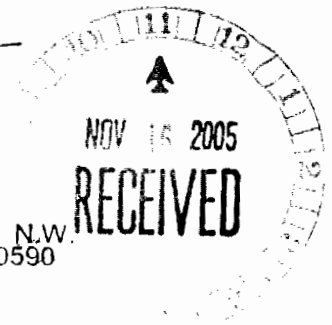


U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Railroad
Administration**

NOV 10 2005

EI-1842
1120 Vermont Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590



Victoria Rutson
Chief, Section of Environmental Analysis
Surface Transportation Board
Office of Economics, Environmental Analysis,
and Administration
Washington, DC 20423

**Re: STB Finance Docket No. 34658, The Alaska Railroad Corporation –
Petition for Exemption to Construct and Operate a Rail Line Between
Eielson Air Force Base and Fort Greely, Alaska**

Dear Ms. Rutson:

I am writing in response to your letter of October 12, 2005, inviting the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to be a cooperating agency in the environmental review of the proposed Alaska Railroad Corporation rail line extension from Eielson Air Force Base to Fort Greely, Alaska. Your letter indicates that, given the extent of the environmental impacts, the review will consist of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

As the agency charged with regulatory oversight over the finished rail line as well as administration of the grant funds that may be used to build the line, FRA has a special interest in this project. Therefore, FRA accepts your invitation and would like to act as a cooperating agency in the preparation of the EIS. Thank you for the opportunity to participate and we look forward to working with the Surface Transportation Board and the other cooperating agencies on the EIS.

Sincerely,

Mark E. Yachmetz
Associate Administrator for
Railroad Development